

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 CU-02 EB-07

TRSE-00 /097 W

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R 021709Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8176

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 7798

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: CH UR

SUBJECT: SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS: SOVIET MFA OFFICIAL

SUMMARY: DURING JUNE 1 CALL ON GENRIKH KIREYEV, DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE SOVIET MFA'S FIRST FAR EAST DEPARTMENT, KIREYEV INSISTED THAT MOSCOW HAD SHOWN GREAT RESTRAINT AFTER MAO'S DEATH, BUT HAD FINALLY BEEN FORCED BY CHINESE POLEMICS TO REPLY; THAT FORMAL RELATIONS NEVERTHELESS REMAINED NORMAL, WITH A PRC DELEGATION ARRIVING ON JUNE 1 TO CONCLUDE THE 1977 TRADE AGREEMENT AND A NEW AMBASSADOR EXPECTED; AND THAT THE BORDER REMAINS QUIET. ON CHINESE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, KIREYEV ASSERTED THAT IMPORTANT DIVISIONS REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

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IN THE TOP LEADERSHIP, THAT MILITARISM STILL PREVADES PEKING'S THINKING, AND THAT CONDITIONS REMAIN UNSTABLE DESPITE THE FACT THAT HAU HAS PROVEN TO BE A SKILLFUL COMPROMISER AND HAS STRENGTHENED HIS POSITION IN RECENT MONTHS. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF AND INR TDYER SONTAG CALLED ON KIREYEV AND HIS

ASSISTANT MAYOROV TO DISCUSS SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS IN THE WAKE OF RECENTLY HEIGHTENED SOVIET POLEMICS. KIREYEV SAID THAT HE SAW NO PROSPECT FOR THE ABATEMENT OF THE "IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE" DUE TO CHINESE INTRANSIGENCE. BUT MOSCOW'S NOTE OF MAY 19 HAD BEEN SENT BECAUSE RECENT CHINESE POLEMICS HAD EXCEEDED THE BOUNDS OF PROPRIETY, EVEN IN TERMS OF IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION, AND AMOUNTED TO INTERFERENCE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THIS COULD NOT BE TOLERATED, KIREYEV INSISTED. THE SOVIETS HAD HELD OFF ON ANTI-CHINESE POLEMICS FOR MORE THAN EIGHT MONTHS AFTER MAO'S DEATH, KIREYEV ARGUED, CITING THE "ALEKSANDROV" ARTICLE OF MAY 14 AS THE FIRST REPLY. WHEN QUERIED ABOUT EARLIER SOVIET COMMENTARIES, BEGINNING IN FEBRUARY, KIREYEV SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN NARROWLY FOCUSED ON SPECIFIC ANTI-SOVIET STATEMENTS OR EVENTS AND WERE NOT INTENDED TO HAVE BROADER IMPLICATIONS. THE MAY 19 NOTE HAD BEEN PUBLICIZED, SAID KIREYEV, IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE SOVIET PUBLIC, AS WELL AS TO PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, THAT CHINESE STATEMENTS HAD GONE TOO FAR AND THAT SOVIET PATIENCE HAD LIMITS. ASKED WHAT CONSEQUENCES HE EXPECTED THE NOTE TO HAVE, BASED ON PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE, KIREYEV REFERRED TO THE NOTES OF JANUARY 1976 AND OF MID-1974. (THE LATTER FOLLOWING THE CAPTURE OF THE SOVIET HELICOPTER CREW) SAYING THAT CHINESE COMMENTARIES THEN HAD MODERATED SOMEWHAT, PARTICULARLY ON "NATIONALITIES" MATERS. IN ANY CASE, HE ADDED, THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP "CANNOT NOT" PAY ATTENTION TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTE, AND THERE MAY BE SOME COOL HEADS WHO WILL ARGUE FOR SOME SOFTENING OF THE RECENT TONE.

2. FORMAL RELATIONS REMAINED NORMAL, HE INSISTED, AND WOULD REMAIN SO. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON THE IMPLICATION OF SOME WORDING IN THE NOTE, KIREYEV STATED FLATLY THAT MOSCOW HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF WITHDRAWING ITS AMBASSADOR FROM PEKING. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CHINESE HAD RECENTLY SUBMITTED THE NAME OF A NEW AMBASSADOR AND THAT THE SOVIETS HAD GIVEN AGREEMENT PROMPTLY. THIS WAS A NORMAL PROCEDURE, HE SAID, AND THE SOVIETS HAD DONE THE SAME WHEN THE PREVIOUS NAME WAS SUBMITTED OVER ONE YEAR AGO. HOWEVER, KIREYEV RESISTED GIVING EITHER THE NAME OR THE EXPECTED DATE OF ARRIVAL FOR THE NEW AMBASSADOR.

3. AS ANOTHER INDICATION OF FORMAL NORMALCY, KIREYEV REPORTED THAT A CHINESE TRADE DELEGATION ARRIVED IN MOSCOW ON JUNE 1. HE SAID THAT BOTH SIDES ANTICIPATED

A QUICK (FEW WEEKS) CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL CONTINUE BILATERAL TRADE TURNOVER AT THE LEVEL OF 280 MILLION RUBLES, THE SAME AS THAT UNDER THE 1976 AGREEMENT. THIS LEVEL WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED BECAUSE THE CHINESE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN INCREASING IT, KIREYEV SAID.

4. ON THE BORDER, KIREYEV SAID THAT IT WAS VERY QUIET AND HAD BEEN FOR A LONG TIME. THERE HAD BEEN NO RECENT INCIDENTS, APART FROM OCCASIONAL ACCIDENTAL CROSSINGS BY HERDSMEN AND ANIMALS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND BY CHINESE BOATMEN AND HAY-GATHERS NEAR VARIOUS RIVER ISLANDS.

5. TURNING TO CHINESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS, KIREYEV STATED THAT THE SITUATION REMAINS UNSTABLE AND THAT IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES PERSIST WITHIN THE PRC LEADER-CONFIDENTIAL

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SHIP ON THREE QUESTIONS: INVESTMENT PRIORITIES, FACTIONALISM, ESPECIALLY OVER THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY, AND THE FATE OF TENG HSIAO-PING. ON INVESTMENT PRIORITIES (ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES) KIREYEV SAID THAT CHINA'S CHRONIC ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES HAVE BEEN

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COMPOUNDED BY NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING THE CURRENT DROUGHT, WHICH HE STATED HAD NOW BECOME MORE SERIOUS IN THE SOUTH-CENTRAL REGION THAN IN THE NORTH. IN ADDITION MOST OF THE MODERATE AND EXPERIENCED ECONOMIC PLANNERS HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM THEIR POSITIONS. (KIREYEV NAMED SEVERAL WHO HAD BEEN REMOVED DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION BUT NOT YET REHABILITATED, AND HE DOWNGRADED THE ECONOMIC EXPERTISE OF DEPUTY PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN.) NEVERTHELESS, THE ECONOMY SEEMED TO BE IN THE HANDS OF PRAGMATISTS, WHO WERE DEVOTED TO MEETING MAO'S AND CHOU'S GOAL OF MAKING CHINA A MAJOR ECONOMIC POWER. THIS OBJECTIVE WAS ALSO APPARENT IN PEKING'S NEW APPROACH TO FOREIGN TRADE, ESPECIALLY WITH DEVELOPED "CAPITALIST" CONFIDENTIAL

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COUNTRIES. CHINA HAS SERIOUS FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROBLEMS AND LIMITED EXPORT POTENTIAL, WHICH KEPT TRADE LOW, BUT THE INTENTION TO EXPAND, ESPECIALLY THROUGH PURCHASES OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, WAS EVIDENT. IT WAS CONVENIENT, SAID KIREYEV, FOR PEKING TO USE THE "GANG OF FOUR" TO EXCUSE PAST FAILURES WHICH IT NOW CHOOSES TO REPUDIATE, BOTH IN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY.

6. ON FACTIONALISM. THE "DEBATE" ON MILITARY MODERNIZATION SHOW THAT THE "STUGGLE FOR POWER" CONTINUES, SAID KIREYEV. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT HAU HAD STRENGTHENED HIS POSITION IN RECENT MONTHS DUE TO HIS SKILL IN EXPLOITING MAOIST PHRASEOLOGY WHILE FINDING A MIDDLE GROUND ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES. KIREYEV SAID THAT HAU HAD RIVALS, MENTIONING YEH CHIEN-YING AND THE REGIONAL MILITARY CHIEFTAINS, WHO WERE ALSO RIVALS WITH EACH OTHER. ANOTHER FACTOR IN THE CURRENT RIVALRY, SAID KIREYEV, WAS THAT HAU, WHO ROSE AS A PARTY BUREAUCRAT IN RURAL HUNAN, MAO'S HOME PROVINCE, DID NOT SHARE EITHER THE CONSTITUENCIES OR THE INTERESTS OF THE LEADERS FROM THE URBAN AND COASTAL AREAS. BUT HAU'S SUCCESS AS A SKILLFUL COMPROMISER SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED, AND HE HAD THUS FAR PREVENTED THE FORMULATION OF A

COALITION OF RIVALS. KIREYEV DATED THE IMPROVEMENT IN HUA'S POSITION FROM "FEBRUARY-MARCH", BUT DID NOT REFER TO SPECIFIC EVENTS TO SUPPORT THIS ASSESSMENT. KIREYEV DID NOT ELABORATE ON THE QUESTION OF TENG HSIAO-PING'S FATE, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT THE ISSUE WAS COMPLICATED AND HAD MAJOR IMPLICATIONS BOTH FOR THE LEADERSHIP COALITION AND FOR THE OTHER CURRENT ISSUES.

7. KIREYEV LAID GREAT EMPHASIS ON WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE THE PERSISTENCE OF CHINESE MILITARISM AND OF MAO'S DICTUM THAT A WORLD WAR IS INEVITABLE AND MUST
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BE PREPARED FOR. BOTH HE AND MAYOROV WERE CONVINCED THAT YEH IN HIS SPEECH OF MAY 9 (PEOPLE'S DAILY) OF MAY 13) HAD SPOKEN OF THE NEED TO PREPARE FOR AN IMMINENT WAR, PRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS POINT (SHICH HINGED ON THEIR TRANSLATION OF YEH'S WORDS) AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH. THEY BOTH ALSO STRESSED THAT PEKING CONTINUES TO TRY TO PREVENT SOVIET-US COOPERATION AND TO WORSEN OUR RELATIONS.

8. ON CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY GENERALLY, HE GAVE A STANDARD RUN-DOWN OF PEKING'S ALLEGED AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS TOWARD ITS SOUTHERN NEIGHBORS, CITING IN PARTICULAR NE WIN'S APPARENT FAILURE TO OBTAIN A CHINESE PLEDGE OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN BURMA DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO PEKING. HE DESCRIBED CHINESE ETHNOCENTRISM AS A FUNDAMENTAL FACTOR IN PEKING'S APPROACH TO OTHER COUNTRIES. LUMPING TOGETHER CHINESE "DEMANDS" TO THE US, JAPAN AND THE USSR, HE SAID PEKING'S ATTITUDE IS, "YOU COME TO US." IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION, KIREYEV SAID THAT HE SAW NO CHANGE AT ALL IN CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY SINCE THE DEATH OF MAO, AND HE SAW NO PROSPECT FOR CHANGE UNTIL INTERNAL STABILITY IS ACHIEVED. THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE WITH THE SOVIET UNION CONTINUES BECAUSE NO ONE IN PEKING IS WILLING TO BE SEEN AS ABANDONING MAOISM. KIREYEV FELT THAT WHATEVER DIFFERENCE THERE MAY HAVE BEEN OVER FOREIGN POLICY WITHIN THE SUCCESSOR LEADERSHIP, THEY HAD BEEN WORKED OUT BY THE END OF JANUARY AND THE DECISION HAD THEN BEEN MADE TO CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH THE WEST AND JAPAN AND TO PERSIST IN MAOIST ANTI-SOVIETISM.

9. COMMENT: KIREYEV'S FRANK PESSIMISM ABOUT SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS APPEARS GENUINE AND SUGGESTS THAT MOSCOW SEES NO PROSPECT FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS IN THE NEAR OR MIDDLE TERM. THE RESUMED POLEMICS, HE IMPLIED
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WERE AN ADMISSION OF THIS. HE APPEARED ANXIOUS TO
CONDEMN CHINESE MACHINATIONS IN STRONG TERMS AND TO
SUGGEST THAT US EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TIES WITH PEKING
NOT UNDERMINE SOVIET-US EFFORTS AT COOPERATION. HE
WAS HESITANT TO ANSWER A QUESTION ON WHAT MOSCOW HAD
EXPECTED OF PEKING'S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE EARLY
POST-MAO PERIOD, SAYING THAT THERE IS, OR CAN BE, A
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WORDS AND ACTIONS. BUT THE
SOVIETS HAVE NOW CONCLUDED THAT PEKING'S LINE HAS
BEEN SET.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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SAS ID: 2305394
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbcr//SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/830c4186-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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